

### REMARKS

The Final Office Action mailed November 10, 2009 considered and rejected claims 17-25 and 29. Claims 17-25 and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maurille et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,484,196 (filed Mar. 20, 1998) (hereinafter Maurille) in view of Yeager et al., U.S. Patent No. 7,213,047 (filed Oct. 31, 2002) (hereinafter Yeager).<sup>1</sup>

By this response, independent claims 17 and 22 are amended such that claims 17-25 and 29 remain pending. Claims 17, 22, and 29 are independent claims which remain at issue. Support for the amendments may be found, *inter alia*, within Specification ¶¶ 0025 & 0031.<sup>2</sup>

As reflected in the claims, the present invention is directed generally toward embodiments for facilitating exclusive in-order processing of related messages. Claim 17 recites, for instance, in combination with all the elements of the claim, a method for facilitating message processing. The method includes requesting one or more messages and determining from information associated with the messages that each of the messages belongs to a conversation group. The messages are linked by a group identifier and the conversation group is locked to prevent another requestor from accessing any of the messages. The method then provides exclusive access to the messages such that only one service can process related messages at any time. When a reader has finished processing the messages, a notification is received from the reader to release the lock and the lock is released.

Claim 22 recites, in combination with all the elements of the claim, another method for facilitating message processing. This method includes receiving a request for a message and determining from information associated with the message that message belongs to a conversation group. The message and other related messages are then associated with a conversation group. The conversation group is locked using a group identifier and exclusive access to the messages of the group is provided to the requestor. When the requestor has

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<sup>1</sup> Although the prior art status of the cited art is not being challenged at this time, Applicant reserves the right to challenge the prior art status of the cited art at any appropriate time, should it arise. Accordingly, any arguments and amendments made herein should not be construed as acquiescing to any prior art status of the cited art.

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the paragraph numbers are taken from the published application, U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2005/0198127 (Sep. 8, 2005). It should also be noted that the present invention and claims as recited take support from the entire Specification. As such, no particular part of the Specification should be considered separately from the entirety of the Specification.

finished processing the messages, a notification is received from the requestor to release the lock and the lock is released.

Claim 29 recites a computer program product which incorporates instructions for carrying out the method of claim 17.

The independent claims were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable in view of Maurille and in view of Yeager. Independent claims 17 and 22 have now been amended and the Applicants submit that the cited references fail to teach or suggest all the limitations of the claims as now presented.

In particular, as to claim 17, the cited references fail to teach or suggest determining from information associated with the message that message belongs to a conversation group. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest determining from information associated with the one or more messages that each of the one or more messages belongs to a conversation group. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest linking the one or more messages by a group identifier. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest locking the conversation group, the lock preventing a disparate requestor from accessing the one or more messages. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest providing exclusive serial access to the messages such that only one service can process related messages at any time. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest when a reader has finished processing the messages, receiving a notification from the reader to release the lock. And the cited references also fail to teach or suggest releasing the lock.

Because of at least the distinctions noted, inter alia, the Applicants submit that a rejection of claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable in view of Maurille and in view of Yeager would be improper and should be withdrawn. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of claim 17 as now presented (as well as the respective dependent claims).

As to claim 22, the cited references fail to teach or suggest determining from information associated with the message that message belongs to a conversation group. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest associating the message and other related messages with a conversation group. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest locking the conversation group via a conversation group identifier. The cited references also fail to teach or suggest providing exclusive access to one or more messages of the conversation group to the requestor.

The cited references also fail to teach or suggest when the requestor has finished processing the messages, receiving a notification from the requestor to release the lock. And the cited references also fail to teach or suggest releasing the lock.

Because of at least the distinctions noted, inter alia, the Applicants submit that a rejection of claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable in view of Maurille and in view of Yeager would be improper and should be withdrawn. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of claim 22 as now presented (as well as the respective dependent claims).

Independent claim 29 is a computer program product incorporating computer executable instructions for performing the method of claim 17. Correspondingly, the discussion above with respect to claim 17 applies also to claim 29 and the Applicants submit that a rejection of claim 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable in view of Maurille and in view of Yeager would be improper and should be withdrawn. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration of claim 29 as now presented.

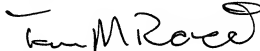
In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the other rejections to the claims are now moot and do not, therefore, need to be addressed individually at this time. It will be appreciated, however, that this should not be construed as Applicant acquiescing to any of the purported teachings or assertions made in the last action regarding the cited art or the pending application, including any official notice. Instead, Applicant reserves the right to challenge any of the purported teachings or assertions made in the last action at any appropriate time in the future, should the need arise. Furthermore, to the extent that the Examiner has relied on any Official Notice, explicitly or implicitly, Applicant specifically requests that the Examiner provide references supporting the teachings officially noticed, as well as the required motivation or suggestion to combine the relied upon notice with the other art of record.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge payment of any of the following fees that may be applicable to this communication, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 23-3178: (1) any filing fees required under 37 CFR § 1.16; and/or (2) any patent application and reexamination processing fees under 37 CFR § 1.17; and/or (3) any post issuance fees under 37 CFR § 1.20. In addition, if any additional extension of time is required, which has not otherwise been requested, please consider this a petition therefore and charge any additional fees that may be required to Deposit Account No. 23-3178.

In the event that the Examiner finds remaining impediment to a prompt allowance of this application that may be clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at (801) 533-9800.

Dated this 10<sup>th</sup> day of February, 2010.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick D. Nydegger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "R" and "N".

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